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SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION SPECIAL, NOVEMBER 12:
TERRORIST ATTACK IN RIYADH

1. SUMMARY: Condemnations of the Riyadh attacks have dominated the Kuwaiti Arabic press this week, with liberals and Islamists alike interpreting the attacks as a distortion of Islam and an assault on the political structure of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf governments. END SUMMARY.

2. News Stories: Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad phoned the Saudi Crown Prince and expressed the strong condemnation of the Kuwaiti government and people of the terrorist attack in Riyadh on November 9. Sheikh Sabah reiterated the Kuwait's solidarity with the Kingdom and its readiness to assist "our Saudi brothers." The Minister of Interior Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmed stated, "The security of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are interconnected."?

Kuwait's Council of Ministers (Cabinet) strongly denounced the terrorist acts in Saudi Arabia. The National Assembly issued a statement that the Assembly "condemns every terrorist act whatever its motives or pattern" and stressed "the security and stability of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are integral".? ?

Islamist MP Khalid Al-Adwa argued that such terrorist acts distorted the image of Islam and Muslims, especially during the holy month of Ramadan.

The Islamic Bloc and five Kuwaiti Islamic charity organizations issued statements of condemnation. The statement from the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society termed the attacks "suicide operations, not martyr operations," and called them a violation of Islamic Sharia (religious law).

Kuwaiti Shiite scholars issued a statement strongly denouncing the recent attacks by "criminal extremists" in Riyadh and condemned the "barbaric and brutal attack by attackers who do not believe in Islam and want to take revenge against Muslims and pilgrims."

Editorials:

3. "Terrorism in the Name of Islam" Liberal Secretary General of the Kuwait Journalist Association Faisal Al-Qanai wrote in independent Al-Seyassah (11/11): "What took place in Saudi Arabia poses a threat to GCC countries. Islamic clerics and scholars must therefore begin a campaign to protect religion from attempts by terrorists and criminals to undermine the image of Islam through sabotage and terrorist activities."

4. "Criminals, not Muslims" Liberal Talal Abdul-Kareem Al-Arab wrote in independent Al-Qabas (11/11): "The perpetrators [of the November 9 Riyadh bombing] are the new outlaws, emerging from their dens to terrify our children and threaten our security under the pretext of being against infidels and occupiers. This is an organized and hidden campaign against Muslims and Islam. The campaign relies on an educated group to incite young Muslims to carry out criminal acts and others who are ready to sacrifice their lives for money in return for a mission that in no way relates to Islam."

5. "What do Terrorists Want?" Liberal Secretary General of the National Democratic Forum, Dr. Ahmad Bishara, wrote in independent Al-Qabas (11/11): "These terrorists exploit internal conditions [in Saudi Arabia] such as unemployment, a deteriorating economy, and restraints on public freedom. On the other hand, wide freedoms are given to Islamic groups and organizations to spread their narrow vision of life and religion. Such an atmosphere provides fertile ground for terrorist ideology. Confronting terrorism requires winning over regular citizens and making them feel they are part of the battle against terrorism. Passive citizens who lack a role in their countries become fuel for the battle."

16. "Torturing Bodies to Frighten Nations"

Mohammad Al-Ajmi wrote in independent Al-Watan (11/12):
"The terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia coincided with the beginning of reforms in the Kingdom through establishing an open dialogue. This signifies that those who are behind the attack do not believe in the language of dialogue and reject reforms. They strongly believe in violence and killing as a means to achieve their goals. Such terrorist attacks should not hinder reforms. Instead, they should serve as a motive to continue with more reforms."

17. "Riyadh's Incident"

Khudair Al-Anzi wrote in independent Al-Qabas (11/12): "We are in a real crisis. There is no guarantee that what happened in Saudi Arabia will not happen in Kuwait or any other country. Extremism has become an international phenomenon. The attacks in Riyadh and Mecca indicate we are facing a dangerous ideology. There should be no dialogue with such ideology, but rather eradicating such thought will protect the whole of society."

18. "Mecca and Riyadh Explosions"

Liberal columnist and Media Advisor to the Prime Minister, Sami Al-Nisf, wrote in independent Al-Anba (11/11): "In Riyadh, apostates of Islam chose a safe residential complex occupied mostly by Muslims to act out their cold-blooded crime. Can anything justify such a criminal act during this holy month [of Ramadan]? . Who else would benefit from such organized criminal acts by Al-Qaeda terrorist organization except the enemies of Arabism and Islam."

19. "Terrorism is Threatening All of Us"

Editor-in-chief of independent Al-Qabas, Waleed Al-Nesef opined (11/10): "The terrorists who carried out the attack in Riyadh wanted to stress that they will strike anywhere, that their crimes will not be limited to Americans and Westerners. These terrorist groups have declared comprehensive war against the [Saudi] regime. The threat to Saudi Arabia is also a threat to the GCC and the entire region."

10. "Forbidding the Permissible"

Liberal Mohammad Al-Saleh wrote in independent Al-Qabas (11/10): "The key foe of the Islamic militants is America and therefore members of Al-Qaeda threatened to strike against the American interests. However, the regretful attack in Saudi Arabia was not against American interests: the landlord of the building is a Saudi citizen, and the tenets who were killed in the attack were Arabs. Isn't this proof that the extremists seek the destruction of Saudi Arabia? Such terrorist acts are expected to happen again either in Kuwait, Bahrain or Saudi Arabia therefore, governments must be alert for extremist plans."

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